

May 25, 1994

MEMORANDUM

Re: "Fear of Living"

The attached article, "Fear of Living," the United States, and the Future of Latin America, persuasively argues that Latin America should not follow the lead of the United States in adopting smoking bans for the public's "own good." The principal points made in the article are the following:

- Social activists attempt to regulate all sorts of human activities for people's "own good." In their view, everyone's life should be completely risk- and discomfort-free and no one bears responsibility for his own actions.
- Nowhere are social activists more busy than in the "war" against smoking. The costs on society of uncontrolled antismoking activism are only now becoming clear, particularly in the United States.
- In the United States, in addition to heavy government regulation of smoking in public places, some employers are beginning to fire employees who smoke -- even off the job -- and demanding that employees submit to urine tests and other assaults against their dignity, all in the name of "health."
- Limitations on an individual's right to choose to smoke cigarettes or drink alcohol -- and to assume any risks that might be involved -- were the first of many steps taken in the United States to control personal lifestyle decisions. The United States now finds itself lost on a slippery slope, interfering in many areas of its citizens' personal lives. Latin America should not make the same mistake.
- Latin America has too many significant challenges to be surmounted to allow itself to be distracted by the decadent attitudes and anxieties that currently prevail in the United States, a rich country. With air pollution choking the citizens of many Latin American cities, and typhoid and cholera epidemics still raging in many parts of the region, Latin

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America cannot afford to become preoccupied with the hypothetical risks presented by a glass of wine at dinner or the whiff of someone else's cigarette.

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